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Need for speed

Hal High student Violet Humphries takes to the trails at COSSA Nordic Skiing Championships on Feb. 12. She landed a second place finish overall. For more photos, see inside this edition. /photo submitted

Business groups brace for possible trade war with U.S.

JAMES MATTHEWS
Staff Reporter

Many business communities are circling their wagons in anticipation of an economic war with Canada's largest trading partner.

Industries and business groups, municipalities and communities are bracing for possible financial impacts. The wariness extends even to Haliburton County.

The expected salvos: A barrage of tariffs, one country answering the other.

United States President Donald Trump dangled the threat of 25 per cent tariffs on imported goods from Canada. Except for Canadian energy resources. He hit the electricity that New York State depends on with a 10 per cent tariff.

So Canada unveiled the treat of retaliatory tariffs on products worth $155 billion from the United States. Tariffs threatened by both countries were delayed for 30 days at the beginning of February.

see TARIFFS page 2

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HHHS looks to community for input on Master Plan

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

The topic of the aging population in Haliburton County has been a circulating conversation for years. Over the next 20 years, the population in Haliburton Highlands Health Services' (HHHS) catchment area is expected to increase by 22 per cent, while it is predicted that the 80 plus population will grow by 59 per cent over the next 10 years. "Our population is growing and it's aging," said HHHS CEO and President Veronica Nelson. "So we need to plan for our future."

Nelson and her team are at the very early stages of what she shared could be a ten year project: the development of a formalized Master Plan for HHHS. Simultaneously, HHHS will be working on a Long Term Care (LTC) plan. "They go hand-in-hand," said Nelson. "They are interdependent on one another, and you have to speak to all of your facilities."

Nelson noted that rolling out the Master Plan is not a "one and done" initiative. There will be dedicated feasibility studies, traffic projects, and most importantly, a number of public consultation sessions to be able to hear from the community. "At each stage, we will look to the community. We want feedback to co-design our healthcare system." Having a plan in place also lines HHHS up for funding opportunities through the ministry; a key component as the organization looks to expand and grow with the needs of the community.

HHHS launched community town halls when Nelson stepped into the role of CEO in 2023. At the time, the buzz in the county was around the recent Minden ER closure, which occurred prior to Nelson starting in Haliburton. Since then, she has diligently worked to establish transparency and open lines of dialogue with the community; even if it means she takes the heat from disgruntled residents. "There is no plan that makes everyone happy," she noted. "We have to balance all the needs and desires, and it will continue to evolve."

It is required by the Ministry of Health that each hospital site has a Master Plan in place. Despite the requirement, this is the first time HHHS has dove into the process, with Nelson at the helm. She shared that there are multiple stages of the planning process; with near-term and long-term goals and action-items rolled into place.

Some of the near-term initiatives include renovations and restructuring: items that need to be established to lay the foundation for long-term goals, which has a 30-year time frame.

A few of the gaps addressed in the near-term projects include space at the hospital for in-patient care. "We have patients that are being admitted to unconventional spaces," Nelson said. "We don't have enough beds, and we know that." Currently, there are 15 beds available in the Haliburton ER, with an average of 18 patients at any given time. This results in increased "hallway medicine," as staff try to keep up with the need.

> ***"At each stage, we will look to the community. We want feedback to co-design our healthcare system.***
>
> — Veronica Nelson, HHHS CEO

The other area of focus is the future of LTC in the community. "We know that having small homes is not sustainable," Nelson said. "We cannot continue to operate in this manner."

Nelson noted that an efficient and sustainable LTC model consists of 160 to 192 beds. "Our goal is to hit 160," she said. The average time to access a bed in a LTC home across the province is 200 days. For Haliburton, it's 300 days, and for Minden, it averages 700. "We're looking for innovative models to bring to the community," Nelson said, in reference to expanding the LTC offerings across the county. The team at HHHS has also partnered with McMaster University to garner a collaborative approach to LTC in the region.

LTC is the first major issue that Nelson and her team will be tackling during the town hall meetings, which is slated for March 5 at their Minden site auditorium and virtually. The second topic of conversation, set for March 26, will really dive into what a hospital Master Plan looks like, and how it is rolled out.

The first session was held on Feb. 19, and provided a general overview of what the next steps are for the community wants and needs as the Master Plan takes shape. "Thank you to our incredible community for joining us in-person and virtually for our first Future of Care Forum," said Laurent Ernst, communications and employee experience lead, and the moderator of the town hall sessions. "Our Master Planning efforts represent a unique and much-needed opportunity in the history of HHHS to rethink and revitalize our healthcare infrastructure."

Ernst and Nelson are eager to co-design a healthcare system that is robust, and capable of meeting the needs of the community, both now and in the future.

"The whole process is iterative and long," said Nelson. "If people feel they have missed an opportunity to speak, we're really open to hearing from our community."

Ernst is eager about what these next steps will look like for the collaborative efforts between HHHS and the community. "We have a desire to roll up our sleeves and work on this with the community," she said. "It's such a vital part of it all, and the only way forward is to do something different."

For more information on upcoming town hall sessions, visit hhhs.ca/MasterPlanning.

Tariffs will have trickle effect on buyers

from page 1

Tariffs are taxes on goods paid by importers. So Canadian companies who sell their wares to industry and consumers south of the border would pay. American companies selling to Canadian markets would pay the tariffs imposed by Canada.

Money generated by the import fee would go to the respective government that imposed it.

That is, if the stalemate is broken and the tariffs are imposed.

American producers of poultry, meat products in various forms, pork, dairy products, natural honey, and some fruits and vegetables could face higher import fees to the Canadian marketplace.

Spices and various grains and rice are on the tariff list. Wine, fermented beverages, and tobacco products from the U.S. may have increased tariffs. Fabrics, plastics, and metals are on the list. Makeup and some other beauty products are there, too, as are materials and tools necessary for manufacturing and construction.

Patti Tallman, the executive director at the Haliburton County Development Corporation (HCDC), said the possible monetary ruckus at the border is a concern for the local economy and how it could impact the community as a whole.

"The local businesses that currently bring goods from the U.S. markets are having to look at things differently," she said.

The Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce, along with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, is conducting a survey to understand the potential impact of U.S. and Canadian tariffs on the county's business community.

Amanda Conn, Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce's executive director, said survey responses will help advocate for policies and resources that support Ontario's business community.

"A 30-day delay means more time for Canadian businesses and governments to drive home the point that tariffs make no sense between the two closest allies the world has ever known," Conn said in an email.

Candace Laing, the national chamber's president and CEO, said the standoff makes it clear that perpetual uncertainty will continue.

"Businesses and investors already feel on shaky ground with the 30-day tariff pause, and now our steel and aluminium industries are first into the fire," she said.

Stakeholders in the construction industry, interior design and decor, retailers, grocery stores all import something from south of the border.

"You may see some stockpile products and critical materials in advance of the tariffs or work with existing U.S. suppliers to absorb some of the tariff costs or explore alternative pricing strategies," Tallman said.

Ultimately, she said tariffs could increase costs. As such, businesses will have to consider whether to absorb the extra costs, pass them on to the customer, or adjust their business model.

Tallman said this is a time to consider new markets and to source materials from Canadian suppliers.

"But, more importantly, how can we look to support our local business community to support our own businesses as much as possible?" she said. "It not only will impact our businesses but will have a trickle effect on everyone buying our day-to-day goods and services."

CORRECTION

In last week's edition, we made reference to New Blue candidate Jacquie Barker. It was brought to our attention that we misspelled her last name in the story. We apologize for this error.

Scott skips candidates debate; left reps show up

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

The blustery storm that hit Haliburton County over the weekend resulted in a last-minute decision to host a Zoom meeting for the progressive candidates representing Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes, and Brock townships on Feb. 16.

The meeting - presented by the grassroots Save the Minden ER group - was originally slated for the Minden Community Centre, but a declaration of significant weather put out by the township forced the meeting online. Despite the shuffle, the event was attended by over 50 interested viewers, who took the time to watch candidates.

Barbara Doyle for the NDP, Alison Bennie for the Liberals, and Tom Regina for the Green Party were present. It was noted that Conservative candidate Laurie Scott was invited to the discussion, but declined attendance.

Each candidate had two minutes to answer their questions, and were offered a one minute rebuttal following each answer. After relaying the rules of the online forum, the moderator, Ken Trinka, kicked off the conversation, allowing each candidate to form their opening remarks.

Regina was selected to go first. "I feel very strongly that we need more Green in opposition," he opened. "Green values are people values."

Bennie, a new face for the Liberal Party, opened by saying that she had just recently stepped into the role just last week. "This is my first time doing anything like this," she shared. The Brockville resident noted that while she may be new to the scene, she does have ties to the Haliburton Highlands, with her parents retiring to the Wilberforce area, before a lack of accessible rural healthcare drove them farther south.

Doyle shared that she is a lifelong resident of Lindsay, and has been involved with the NDP since 2018. "This election has never been more important," she noted. "There's a lot of opportunity for our riding to be better than it is."

Due to the fact that the meeting was hosted by the Save the Minden ER group, it is no surprise that the questions kicked off with the candidates' thoughts around healthcare. The three party reps were posed with answering which specific actions they may take to restore emergency services to the area, and to aid in the healthcare crisis that is sweeping the province.

Bennie noted that Liberal leader Bonnie Crombie "wants to address" the healthcare concerns, while Doyle dove in with a clear-cut plan. "The NDP and Marit Stiles tried to stop the closure," she said in reference to the Minden ER, sharing that this is their "number one priority." Doyle noted that it is not a solution that would happen overnight, due to changes in legislation and funding, but action-items would be put in place to re-open the Minden ER, including fair wages to healthcare workers.

> ***"Having a government where you can access your leaders is very important.***
>
> — Barbara Doyle, NDP candidate

Regina answered that healthcare should be publicly funded, and publicly driven, but noted that the future of the Minden ER is uncertain. "We can't really say one hundred per cent that the ER is going to be re-opened," he answered honestly. "The re-establishment of funding is needed."

This was the only question throughout the duration of the candidates meeting that drew a rebuttal. Doyle of the NDP piped up once the opportunity was presented, and addressed Bennie of the Liberal Party. "Isn't your leader on record saying we've been spending too much money on healthcare," she asked.

To this, Bennie noted that she hadn't heard that, but noted it may have been something Liberal leader Bonnie Crombie had said in the past. "I want to live in the present," said Bennie. "And I totally agree with everyone who spoke on this healthcare issue. I have no beef."

The candidates were then asked about governance and transparency, and how they intend to ensure transparency to the people. Doyle noted that there was a lack of transparency from the current Conservative government and their constituents, and directly referenced Laurie Scott's absence at the meeting. "Having a government where you can access your leaders is very important," she noted.

Regina agreed. "I can only address my own willingness to engage with the public," he said.

Bennie shared that she was interested in offering regular newsletters to the constituents, and running town halls in an effort to get more engaged.

When it came to affordability and cost of housing, the three candidates were largely on the same page, all agreeing that it is one of the largest issues faced in our province. Regina noted that the Green Party intends to eliminate the land transfer tax for first time homebuyers, while Bennie took a focus on long term care, and reducing taxes for lower and middle income families. Doyle spoke on the importance of rent control, and offering stability for the unhoused in rural communities. She also noted that it would be beneficial to work directly with municipalities, to understand the needs of the individual rural communities within each riding.

The environment was at the forefront of many initiatives from all three parties, and when asked about rural sustainability and balancing growth with environmental impact, Doyle noted that step one would be to "clean up the damage that has already been done." She also urged the importance of ensuring proper protections are taken at manufacturing levels. "We have to make sure more problems aren't happening moving forward," she said. "We have to understand that tourism is an incredible economic driver, and a smart investment."

Bennie noted that she believes farmland and greenspace are the biggest assets of the riding, and is interested in extending the cycling paths around the region.

For the Green Party, Regina shared that they hope to reinstate powers to conservation authorities, and create a blue belt to protect waterways, and a food belt to protect farms.

For education, the three parties were once again aligned, focusing on ensuring rural schools are properly funded and staffed. Regina and Bennie noted that adding mental health services to OHIP would be beneficial to school systems, considering the challenges faced by school-aged children. "I'm going to totally agree with my colleagues," said Doyle. "Schools have been chronically underfunded, and student transportation has been slashed." She added that the NDP would offer a universal school food program, and $830 million a year to dedicate to school repairs.

Once the moderator went through the questions, the floor was opened up to respectful dialogue and questions from the viewers. While the topics of long term care and passport funding were broached, the elephant in the room was about the pending tariffs from U.S. President Donald Trump.

Bennie simply noted that she did not know the answer. Regina shared that the Green Party would form a tariff task force to tackle the issue, while Doyle put forward an "Ontario-first" solution. "We need to look for income assistance for those who are hardest hit by this issue," she said. "So we can ensure our families and our workers are protected with income support."

With the absence of Conservative Party representative Laurie Scott, the three candidates of the major parties were largely aligned on nearly every issue put forward, with one viewer noting that this may split the left-leaning vote.

To understand the policies and individual beliefs of each party, it is highly recommended to visit their websites, or contact each candidate individually to seek clarification on potential concerns.

All three representatives encouraged everyone to go out and vote. "When we go to the polls, we need to think about what issues are top of mind," closed Doyle. "You all need to get out and vote and be heard."

Election day lands on Feb. 27. You do not need a voter registration card to vote, just proper identification is required. For more information, visit www.elections.on.ca.

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Highlands East's proposed budget has 6% tax increase

JAMES MATTHEWS

Staff Reporter

Highlands East property owners may pay an extra six per cent on their tax bills this year.

Township council heard a summary of the 2025 municipal capital and operating budget during its Feb. 19 meeting. The proposed spending plan contained a 5.96 per cent tax rate increase over last year.

That means an extra $33.38 for every $100,000 of a property's assessed value. That's about the cost of a quiet night at home with the missus tucked into a pizza and watching something on one of those streaming services.

The proposed budget will be voted on March 11.

Brittany McCaw, the township's CAO and treasurer, said the 2025 budget is the result of careful planning on the part of management and staff across municipal departments.

The priorities identified reflect the township's commitment to remain productive and forward thinking while addressing the municipality's monetary needs, she said.

"Information gathering and costing is essential in shaping a budget that aims to enhance the quality of life of our citizens," she said.

The key areas in the spending plan include infrastructure improvements for roads, bridges, public facilities, and water and wastewater works.

McCaw said economic development was considered when writing the proposed budget, as was sound environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Internal processes were streamlined to better help Highlands East's residents and township staff.

"As council is very well aware, budgets are never easy to prepare," she said. "Careful consideration goes into municipal needs and often many expenses can be beyond our control.

"We are navigating challenging times and it's crucial to address the factors influencing our financial planning."

Those include inflation, supply chain challenges, and rising energy costs.

"If that wasn't already enough, we also now need to consider the threat of potential tariffs, import costs, and what that could mean to our municipality as well," McCaw said. "All of which means these are rising costs beyond our control."

Indeed, public and private entities throughout Ontario and Canada are bracing for the possible effects of steep tariff increases threatened by the United States. Though their implementation has been postponed, the U.S. has threatened tariff increases by as much as 25 per cent on goods shipped to Canada.

General government revenues increased by $185,800 this year by way of the provincial Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund grant. Total funding for 2025 is about $2.1 million.

This year will be the first full year for the recently established Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) as part of the short-term rental regulations. McCaw said no money was budgeted from that source as there's no way to yet know how much money the township will bring in as its share.

Half of whatever is charged to short-term rental property owners will go to a municipal services corporation under the umbrella of Haliburton County to be used towards local tourism.

"Once we get through the year we'll kind of have an idea of what we're looking at terms of revenue," McCaw said. "That revenue is going to come in on a quarterly basis."

She said planning staff have indicated that only few hundred dollars has been generated by the MAT so far.

"We're just kind of going to wait and see how it goes for the year and then we can revisit it next year for a dollar amount," she said.

The Canada Community Building Fund grant to the township in 2025 is $125,433 and could be used to expend Glamor Lake Road.

Capital projects include $85,000 for municipal office design, engineering and surveying; $80,000 for a records management project; and $8,500 toward completing the asset management plan revision.

The township will pay $25,000 for the Fire Master Plan; $121,500 for three replacement Jaws of Life equipment; $17,000 for two bunker suits; and station upgrades that range from $82,600 at Highlands Grove to $33,985 to upgrades Monck Road facility.

The contract with the OPP rose in 2025 by about five per cent over the previous year.

That's a monthly increase of $4,677 for a total contract cost of about $1.2 million.

"Initially, this amount was much higher prior to the province providing assistance to offset the reconciled costs for 2023," McCaw said. "Initial monthly billing amount was $116,406 or $1,396,874. An increase of nearly 18.56 per cent."

Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund money in the amount of $144,593 in 2025 will be used to complete repairs to the McColls Bridge.

"We have carefully prioritized projects to ensure we maximize every impact of every dollar spent," she said. "We do strive to maintain a balanced, sustainable budget and it is important to acknowledge that there are external factors that are beyond our control."

McCaw said municipal staff must work together to find innovative solutions, make informed decisions, and ensure the financial stability and well-being of our community.

"We have worked diligently to balance these priorities with the need to maintain a prudent fiscal approach," she said. "Our goal is to deliver a budget that is both ambitious yet achievable, ensuring that we can continue to provide high quality services to our residents without compromising our financial stability."

County council says why wait for a pay bump?

JAMES MATTHEWS

Staff Reporter

Haliburton County councillors gave themselves a pay raise back-dated to Jan. 1.

It was initially recommended by county staff that the salary raise would come into effect Jan. 1, 2026.

The warden will be paid $57,519.18, the deputy warden $25,200.81, and councillors $23,242.41.

Some of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EWOC) members represent larger centres. But the work is the same and much of the services Haliburton County provides are the same, said Gary Dyke, the county's CAO.

So that justifies boosting the rate of pay for local upper tier councillors, along with the warden and the deputy warden.

"I do think it is important that the compensation recognizes the work that's being done," Dyke said. "I think it's interesting to note (that) by going with the median salary of EWOC municipalities it puts County of Haliburton in the 50 percentile of the counties, which is the same standard council sets for our staff compensation."

Raising the compensation rates to that of the median rate of the EWOC municipalities will add $39,348.69 to the county operating budget.

There will be no changes to the per diem rate or the rate of compensation for mileage driven in a private vehicle on council business.

Councillor Murray Fearrey, the mayor of Dysart, said such changes are always done the year before an election. The round of municipal elections are slated for Oct. 26, 2026.

"I want people to know to have some planning," Fearrey said. "Come on, some of us are getting old here and we need to be replaced and we need young people to replace us."

He said council should start the remuneration changes immediately.

"I don't see why we need to wait for a year," he said. "If you're doing the job, you should get the money."

"You would suggest January 2025," said Warden Dave Burton, the mayor of Highlands East.

Coun. Bob Carter, Minden Hills' mayor, brought council's attention to a mathematical error in the proposed median compensation.

"We shouldn't be counting the existing Haliburton in there to calculate the median," he said.

"If you take Haliburton out of the list, then the median shifts," Dyke said. "We're part of the calculation."

Carter said the warden compensation should be $57,159.18 by way of the correct math.

Deputy Warden Liz Danielsen, the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, said she agrees with Fearrey's sentiments about raising the amount of compensation to possibly draw interest from younger people to get into the municipal and county political arenas. But a pay raise wasn't budgeted for this year.

> ***"I don't see why we need to wait for a year, if you're doing the job, you should get the money.***
>
> — Dysart Mayor Murray Fearrey

"I have no doubt that we can probably find the money," she said.

At about $40,000, Dyke said the change would be minor to the county's operating budget.

"I would respectfully disagree that we start it any earlier than the beginning of next term," said Coun. Jennifer Dailloux, the deputy mayor of Algonquin Highlands. "I believe that our community is really experiencing hard financial times and I know that everyone at this table knows that too and respects that too."

It's incumbent as community leaders for councillors to refuse a pay raise when so many folks are hurting. It's different for the crowd that will come in at the start of the next term. And improving pay would be a good draw to many people.

"It's not an easy job," she said. "It's not a well understood job. There is a lot of hatred that comes our way and people need to be compensated for their pains."

Spike-tacular Red Hawks

The senior girls volleyball team faced off against the senior Port Hope Spartans at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School last week. The local team came out on top with a tight 3-1 win. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Community outreach services brings everyone together

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

Community Mobile Outreach meets once a week or more in locations throughout Haliburton County. The purpose of these services is to provide support to those that are underserved, says Sue Tiffin, Haliburton County's community safety and well-being plan coordinator.

The services provided are easily accessible, low-barrier supports including housing help, mental health, addiction and harm reduction, community paramedicine, food supports, and education and employment, says Tiffin.

The community engagement events are open to the public at no charge. Everyone is welcomed to participate, ask questions, eat snacks, have some refreshments, and receive safe non-judgmental support from multiple community agencies.

This Community Mobile Outreach Initiative began in Haliburton County in June of 2023, based on a similar initiative conducted in the City of Kawartha Lakes, says Tiffin.

"The initiative was introduced in partnership with our City of Kawartha Lakes partners to respond to the challenge of vulnerable community housing residents, and guests, being further disadvantaged throughout the pandemic," said Tiffin. "Our CKL partners recognized a rise in safety concerns due to increased vulnerabilities, limited community support being provided due to safety concerns, and there was the continued challenge of housing and health being siloed."

The City of Kawartha Lakes reached out to Haliburton County and their outreach services, blossoming a successful collaboration.

"At first, a group of service providers began meeting in central areas of community housing to meet with residents and or their guests as well as others seeking support who would come to the outreach knowing it was happening that day," said Tiffin. "As we have seen need and opportunity for outreach in other locations, the group has also visited Minden Court on busy court days, the Minden Community Food Centre, the Wilberforce Arena (adjacent to the food bank on food bank days), and John Howard Society."

Many people that attend their sessions have been resistant to services and participation in the past, says a report from the City of Kawartha Lake's Outreach Services. Participants can come and enjoy a meal and listen in on conversations with service providers. While seeking assistance with something like a blood pressure check, patients can see access to other services, such as mental health support, or a sexual health professional. There is no obligation for individuals to participate and are welcome to attend as often as they want.

When these events are happening in community housing buildings, tenants can mention wellness concerns they have for their neighbours, leading to outreach team members to knock on people's doors.

Occasionally, these interventions have uncovered acute health issues that could have resulted in very bad outcomes.

Overall, these events bring community members together, fostering meaningful conversations and building community.

"Many regular community members help make visits run smoothly as well," said Tiffin. "Through checking in on and inviting their neighbours to join and offering feedback that might help us best serve needs in the community."

Currently the following service partners regularly join in on the initiative:

- City of Kawartha Lakes - Outreach Services & Life Stabilization Supports;
- County of Haliburton – Community Paramedicine Program;
- County of Haliburton – Community Safety and Well-Being;
- John Howard Society – Harm Reductions and other Addiction Support Services;
- Haliburton Highlands Health Services – Mental Health Supports, Community Support Services;
- Heat Bank Haliburton County, a program of Central Food Network;
- Peterborough AIDS Resource Network (PARN);
- Durham Community Health Centre.

Additionally, the program has also been attended by CMHA-HKPR; Community Legal Clinic; Fleming Crew; SIRCH; Point in Time – Youth Hub and the YWCA.

Last year, Tiffin estimates that there were 500 service-user interactions.

"I think that the barrier-free connections service providers have been able to make with community members by meeting them where they're at have been tremendously helpful for community members, but also the service providers have been able to make connections with each other to connect, network and collaborate, resulting in additional benefits for our community," said Tiffin.

In a recent report to council, Jennifer Dailloux praised the program for evolving to meet the unique challenges that arise in rural environments associated with physical and social isolation.

Tiffin says that the initiative has been evolving since its inception, continuing to attract more service providers and expand to more locations. Their services continue to listen to those seeking the services as well as the needs and concerns of the service providers.

Tiffin says that some successes for service users have included diverting emergency department visits, intervening with acute health conditions, connecting people to services, creating social connections, and re-buidling trust between the public and service providers.

The service providers have noticed that they are able to network, provide frontline staff, and attract new staff.

Tiffin lists the key success outcomes as being:

- Easily accessible (low barrier) supports
- Key locations
- Multi-disciplinary services
- Safe, non-judgmental service philosophy
- Willing partners
- Partner collaboration
- Trauma and violence informed care approaches
- Key locations
- Multi-disciplinary services
- Safe, non-judgmental service philosophy
- Willing partners
- Partner collaboration
- Trauma and violence informed care approaches
- Being willing to pivot

The County regularly posts the next month's schedule on the County of Haliburton's Facebook page. The schedule is also posted at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/en/living-here/community-safety-well-being-events.aspx

The next Community Outreach event will take place in Wilberforce on Feb. 26 at 2256 Loop Road from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

points of view

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Head Lake at sunset, while another winter day wraps up, one step closer to spring. /Adam Frisk

Editorial

Decisions, decisions

emily stonehouse

I LIKE CHOICES. Options. They're nice to have.

We all like a little variety in our day-to-day. Some say it's the spice of life; keeps things fresh. Choices and options are what allows us to figure out what we really want, to select something that we really need.

But as I watched the candidates debate on a snow Sunday last week, I thought that perhaps we have too many options.

I have seen a few all-candidates meetings in my time. And while I appreciate the hard work that went into organizing (and then pivoting) the format of the debate, the whole meeting was very tame.

Most of the time, the three representing parties - Green, NDP, and Liberal - were entirely aligned on every platform. If anything, I think they sometimes tried to shuffle a little bit to create some differentiation in their answers.

I won't get into how Laurie Scott and the Progressive Conservatives were absent. There's room for that in another editorial (maybe check out this week's *Minden Times* if you are interested), but the three left-leaning parties made sure to show up.

And split the vote.

When we have so many choices, so many options that align with our politics, how do we pick? And does our vote matter when there are multiple other parties who share the same ideologies? Or worse? So many other parties who do not.

Now don't get me wrong, I do not think that the situation they have in the United States is the answer. When there are only two options, the distance between the platforms is stretched more and more - with the folks in the middle feeling the tension of the tug, the stress of the impending snap that will slap the wrists of everyone in between. Polarization of politics has never been more noticeable.

But I do wish there was some foresight for political parties to band together.

During that snowy debate, all candidates agreed on environmental sustainability, on access to mental health resources, on prioritizing healthcare funding, on improving economic stability in rural communities.

And most importantly: on voting the PCs out.

With the importance of this election and the future of Ontario at risk, this is an important time to endorse, to collaborate, to unify.

And the values of the left-leaning parties seem to be so similar, this time around. Even as someone who has meticulously followed every step of this election, I still feel unsure about who is most aligned with the specific needs of my family, my colleagues, my community.

But what I do know, is that maybe this is a time to think strategy. Maybe we put some consideration into who has the best shot, without splitting the vote.

Because choices, options, they're nice to have.

But it's time for a change in our riding. That's what we really need.

Get out and vote

Green meadow

Tales from the great

lynda shadbolt

MY MOM, Marie, is 91 years old and together we watched the local debate last Sunday with Alison Bennie (Liberal), Barbara Doyle (NDP) and Tom Regina (Green). We had planned to go in person, but the winter of wild snow kept us home and so we Zoomed it. It was Marie's first and only Zoom meeting in her life. She was in awe of the technology and the ease that brought so many people together.

As a kid I remember both of my parents working hard in every election. They canvassed, worked at voting polls, delivered flyers, put up signs and they took us to rallies for young voters. There was always an understanding that we have to work together to create a healthy society for all to live in. We all get to have a say in our future.

In 2025 my mother is concerned about health care in our province. She hasn't had a family doctor since she moved up here in 2021. She watched my dad suffer with a lack of home support and eventually having to be moved to long term care. She watched the staff in long term care struggle with staff shortages. Marie has always believed that good health care is a right of all. Marie is a grandmother who is concerned for her grandchildren's future. How will they be able to afford a home? What kind of education system will their kids be in?

And she is concerned about our planet. She follows the news and is aware of the impact of climate change. Marie pays attention and she cares. The three candidates who showed up, Alison, Barbara and Tom spoke well. They were well informed and passionate about what their party wants to bring to Ontario and to our riding. They were all clear about the kind of communities that are needed to take care of everyone. My mom and I were shocked that Laurie Scott wasn't present to share the Conservative plans and ideas, especially since the debate was on Zoom. Everyone could attend from their own living room.

What I felt, from the candidates who showed up, was how much they care about our riding. I felt like they could all relate to and understand the lives of everyday people. I felt like they all agreed that everyone matters. Everyone deserves good health care, affordable housing, good education, nutritious food and a healthy planet to live on. After the debate Marie and I called my daughter, Madeline, who lives in Ottawa to talk about her plan to vote. We talked a little bit about the debate and what each candidate stood for. And then we encouraged her to do more research, talk to her friends, think about what is important for her and then make a plan to vote. We all need to have conversations with our kids and grand-kids and our friends. We need to talk more about what really matters and what kind of society we want to live in. And then we all need to get out and vote for what we believe in. If Marie can vote… everyone can!

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points of view

Squirrel proofing

steve galea

Loon Tales

If a biologist was tasked with re-introducing eastern gray squirrels to an area where they have been previously eradicated, I would advise him or her not to design any complicated trap and transfer program. Instead, I would tell them to ask me to buy a bird feeder, fill it up with expensive seed, and set it up in the location they wanted to reintroduce the squirrels to.

Within a week, the place would be overrun with them.

And there would be even more, if I set up a "squirrel-proof" bird feeder, because, apparently, squirrels love a good challenge.

Frankly, I believe there is no such thing as a squirrel-proof bird feeder, which is one of humanity's greatest ironies.

We can send a man to the moon, but we can't keep a rodent out of a bird feeder. In fact, if I was looking to make enough money to buy Elon Musk's share of the US presidency, I would spend all my time designing a truly squirrel-proof bird feeder.

This would also explain my conversation with Jenn the other day.

"What are you drawing?" she asked.

"I am not drawing anything," I answered curtly. "These are the blueprints for the world's first truly squirrel-proof feeder. This is a serious endeavour that requires an expert-level knowledge of squirrel behaviour, logic, design expertise, and professionalism. If you don't mind, I need to concentrate. So, could you please pass the blue crayon and then leave me to focus?"

"Squirrel-proof feeder?" she chuckled, as she walked out of the room. "Every now and then you come up with a good one!"

But I was dead serious.

By that point, I had already designed the 12-foot high, electrified fence perimeter, that was topped with razor wire and covered by the four towers that the snipers provided overwatch from. The bird feeder itself would also be hung from an isolated greased poled whose first six feet was wrapped in barbed wire and always heated to red-hot by a dedicated smelting oven. Needless to say, to get to that pole, the squirrel would have to negotiate itself through an impossible maze filled with landmines, laser beams, and populated with squirrel-eating creatures.

Yet, even I knew that this was not enough to defeat a determined tree rat. Something was missing.

Unfortunately, a brief Internet search asking, "Do minotaurs actually exist?" proved inconclusive, with only Fox News suggesting they might.

Nevertheless, I showed my work to Jenn, who listened intently and then checked my temperature, but also said something complimentary about my project.

"I think you've been working too hard," she said. "Why don't you take a break. But not by the window in sight of the bird feeder."

"Sure," I replied.

And then she led me to the basement, handed me the book that I had started, and said, "Read for a while and I'll make you a nice cup of tea."

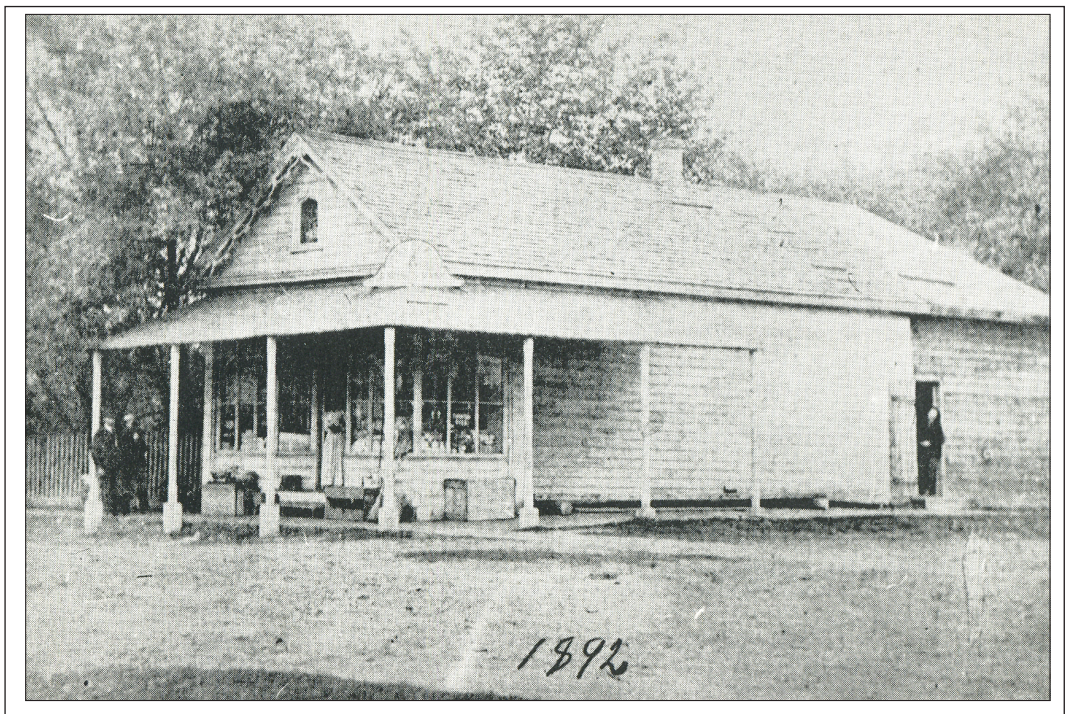
Moments later, she came down with the tea.

"Now that you've had time to digest it, what do you think of my design?" I asked.

She shrugged uncomfortably and then said, "To be honest the whole concept seems unrealistic."

Those words hit hard and almost made me want to retire my crayons and straight-edge forever. But I had to concede, she was right. I was being completely unrealistic.

We were going to need air support too.



pic *of the* **past**

POST OFFICE and store, Haliburton, 1892, on the corner of Highland Street and Maple Avenue. Perhaps that is the same lilac tree that blooms each spring in town.

Haliburton Highlands OPP introduce body worn cameras

The Haliburton Highlands Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are rolling out new technology to their front-line officers.

After a successful roll out of In Car Cameras (ICC) which incorporated an Automated Licence Plate Recognition (ALPR) system, the Haliburton Highlands OPP along with other detachments within Central Region, are starting to roll out their next piece of technology in the form of Body Worn Cameras (BWC).

The implementation of BWCs provides one more tool for the OPP to enable the collection of better evidence, demonstrate greater accountability and transparency, and enhance public and officer safety in the communities we serve.

The BWCs are worn on the front of the officer's vest and are clearly visible to anyone an officer may be interacting with. The BWC will display a visible ring of flashing green lights when in standby mode which will turn to flashing red lights once the BWC begins recording.

Officers are currently being trained on the use of the new technology and are being outfitted with their BWC upon the completion of their training. The full rollout for the Haliburton Highlands OPP is anticipated by early spring however officers who have received their training will begin use of the BWCs immediately.

To serve our province by protecting its citizens, upholding the law and preserving public safety. Haliburton Highlands OPP values your contribution to building safe communities. If you have information about suspected unlawful activity, please visit Crime Stoppers at: www.khcrimestoppers.com, or call 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

Submitted

Heading off on vacation? Make sure your home is ready

Take precautions to help prevent thieves from paying a visit...

Are you heading south for a sunny vacation, or off to a ski resort? Take steps to ensure your home is safe and secure while you're gone.

Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) members across East Region have these suggestions:

- Do not announce your vacation plans on social media
- Don't advertising your absence by posting pics while you are away
- Arrange for someone to look after your home so it appears occupied - this includes shovelling the walkways and driveway, picking up mail, flyers and newspapers and putting out garbage and recycling for normal pickup
- Ask trusted neighbours to keep an eye on your home while you are away and leave your vacation contact info with them in case of an emergency
- Use timers for lights and have exterior lights with motion detectors
- Make sure all windows and doors, including garage doors, are locked
- Leave shades and blinds in a position that you normally would have them
- If possible, ask a neighbour to park in your driveway
- Make sure smoke and burglary alarms are functioning properly and armed
- If you have them, make sure surveillance or doorbell cameras are working
- Catalogue your valuables and consider a safety deposit box
- Review your home insurance policy

Your vacation should be an enjoyable, relaxing experience. Taking these steps can help to ensure your return home isn't a nightmare.

Submitted

letters to the editor

Think about poverty this election time

To the Editor,

As the provincial election nears, I ask that voters in Ontario think about the candidate that will consider the poverty that exists in our community and throughout Ontario.

I am on the Board of Directors for Central Food Network (CFN), a not-for-profit charity that runs two food banks in Highlands East - one in Wilberforce, the other in Cardiff. We also share food with Minden Food Bank and North Hasting Cupboard when available. CFN also runs Heat Bank Haliburton, which provides emergency heating for residents throughout Haliburton County. We run income tax clinics throughout Haliburton to help those with modest income submit income tax returns on time and thus be able to access benefits that come through filing income tax. We also help individuals navigate the various agencies to get hydro rebates, stop hydro disconnections and other benefits available throughout the County and Province. And CFN has a Community Cooks program that makes and freezes thousands of meals a year which are distributed through the food banks. CFN does all of this without any ongoing government funding. We have been successful in getting some project specific grants from various governments but no government funding is provided to feed or help keep warm the many individuals that we see monthly at our food banks or heat banks. We rely on the generosity of our community and the fundraising efforts of the organization to feed and keep warm individuals in Haliburton. It frightens me that the ability for someone to eat is dependent on how successful we are as an organization to raise money!

We have seen an incredible increase in need in services provided by CFN. The use of the food banks we run has increased 52.5 per cent from 2021 (an average of 241 people per month in 2024 versus 158 per month in 2021). Some of the clients are working families that are made to choose between eating and rent. Use of Heat Bank Haliburton had a record 50 calls for help in January alone (the most ever in a single month). This is becoming a crisis in Ontario.

Ontario needs to make a commitment to erase poverty in Ontario. Individuals need to make a living wage so that they can afford housing, food and heat. As the use of food banks and heat banks and need for affordable housing has only increased in the last five plus years, it is crucial that the government that we elect be responsive and responsible for these very basic personal rights. I ask that you please consider this as you vote in the provincial election this month.

Nancy Wright-Laking
Chair of the Board,
Central Food Network
Highlands East

Climate will always change and fluctuate

To the Editor,

As a follow up to the letter written by Sharon Lynch, I would first say I agree with what Mayor Fearrey said about climate change. To go one step further, there was an "ice age" and a "dinosaur age", years earlier than where we are now. Yes, we all have to minimize and control the pollution, we as individuals put out, but the climate will always continue to change/fluctuate no matter how much you try to control it. So yes, these representatives do represent others. As far as summer/winter visitors they will always come as our town is beautiful and unique. Let's keep it that way!

Denise McCluskey,
Haliburton

Letters to the Editor note: Submissions are subject to editing for newspaper style and punctuation.

No cost for EV charge

To the Editor,

In my letter of the Feb 18, 2025 edition of the *Echo*, I stated that no taxpayer money is being used to install EV Chargers in Haliburton. I would like to add that all ongoing costs, except for bylaw enforcement and snow plowing would be assumed by Lakeland EV Charging if that is what the municipality chose to do. There is a small amount of revenue generated by the EV Chargers and that would cover any ongoing costs, including electricity. If you have any doubts about this, please listen to the recording of the presentation on the Dysart et al website.

The Charged for Change website states that it is known that a lack of publicly available EV charging infrastructure can be a barrier to EV adoption and wants to support Canadians, in communities with little or no access in making the switch to an EV. Cottagers travel long distances to come to Haliburton and may need to charge their vehicles while they pick up groceries or have lunch in town before continuing to their destination.

In its first two years, the Charged for Change program funded Level Two charging stations in fifteen Ontario municipalities. Testimonials from these communities state that the charging stations had boosted tourism in their communities, and that it had allowed the municipality to begin to transition their fleet of vehicles to EVs.

If people would like to learn more about EVs, Environment Haliburton! will be hosting an EV Show in August. Please check the EH! website at www.environmenthaliburton.org for details about this event closer to the summer.

Susan Hay,
President,
Environment Haliburton!

The sound of music

To the Editor,

Last Sunday afternoon, I went to the Legion in Haliburton and listened to the artists performing as part of the Folks and Friends event. It was a great way to spend a winter afternoon. Two days earlier on Friday evening I was at the Music Room at Castle Antiques listening to some fun 70s and 80s rock. Haliburton offers some great entertainment opportunities if you just go look for them!

Dave Sands,
Haliburton

Pride flag to be flown

To the Editor,

Minden Pride in Haliburton Highlands would like to extend our thanks to the Dysart Council for their decision to fly the Pride Flag during our annual Minden Pride Week Festival August 18th to 24th.

The new flag policy was adopted by Council at their November meeting and the Pride Flag is now a pre-approved community flag that is to be raised annually in Dysart et al during Pride in the Highlands.

While this moment has been long-awaited by many, its arrival is no less powerful. This simple yet profound act sends a clear message: everyone, no matter who they love or how they identify, is valued and belongs here.

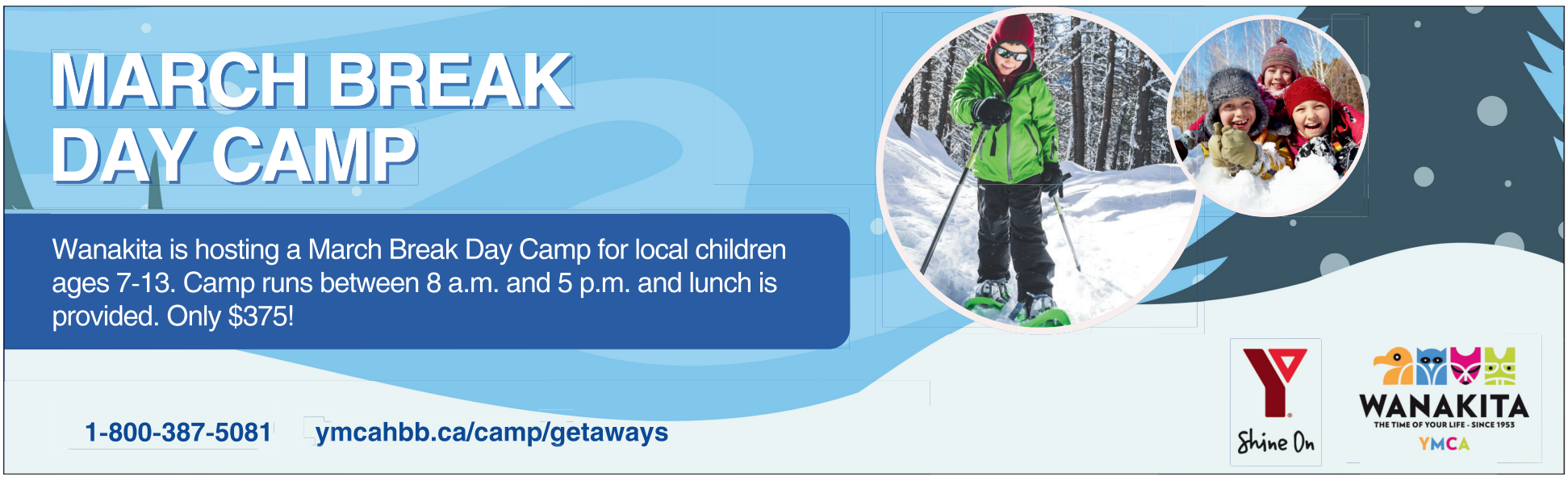
While division can so often overshadow unity, the Pride Flag is more than just a symbol for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. It is a beacon of inclusion, affirmation and hope for everyone.

This step forward offers an opportunity to grow as a community. To proudly share our values of kindness, respect and dignity. To celebrate our diversity and reaffirm our commitment to building a future where each of us is included.

A commitment for which all of us at Minden Pride are grateful.

We will continue to build Pride in the Highlands and create a community where Everyone is Welcome. Together We Rise.

Minden Pride in the
Haliburton Highlands
Planning Committee


MARCH BREAK
DAY CAMP
Wanakita is hosting a March Break Day Camp for local children ages 7-13. Camp runs between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. and lunch is provided. Only $375!
1-800-387-5081
ymcahbb.ca/camp/getaways
Shine On
WANAKITA
THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE - SINCE 1953
YMCA

Cam Espina of Haliburton plays guitar in Doorstep Fire, and has been regularly playing gigs in and around the community for years.

Seamus Lynch of Haliburton is the lead singer of Doorstep Fire, a punk band based out of Toronto. Lynch and fellow band members hope to use music to navigate a challenging political climate. /photo submitted

Music for the ages; how punk rock unites an experience

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

A group of Haliburton locals have taken to the stage in an effort to raise awareness around social justice.

Of the four-member punk group Doorstep Fire, three of the band members have called Haliburton County 'home.' Seamus Lynch, Cameron Espina, and Wesley Stoughton are no strangers to the music scene of the area; having participated in Battle of the Bands, which raised money for the local skate park that is used and loved today.

The musicians also formed The Bones of Jim Jones while in high school, playing at their 2020 graduation ceremony, then heading to Montreal to record an album before going their separate ways.

After living out west, Lynch felt the draw to return to a world of creativity. When an opening came up to relocate to Toronto, he jumped at the opportunity. As he settled into city life, he started to find his artistic world take shape. "I've found a community here of artists and like-minded people," said Lynch.

He had one priority: form a punk band. And slowly but surely, the members from his original Haliburton-music days seemed to fall into place in the conception of Doorstep Fire.

But as political tensions continue to rise around the world, Lynch - the lead singer and lyricist - feels it's more important than ever to use their platform. "Fascism and far-right ideologies are on the rise," said Lynch. "We want to unite a community of like-minded artists and free thinkers."

Lynch described Doorstep Fire's style as hardcore punk, but with a timeless sound. He noted that he grew up listening to old blues tunes by Miles Davis and Dizzy Gillespie, while other members of the band are professionally trained in jazz or heavy metal. "It's a real blend," he said.

As the lead lyricist, Lynch puts the songs together, then brings them to the table for the rest of the band to dissect and build-on. Together, they prioritize the need for general references, while still trying to stay timely and topical. "We want people to listen to our music 20 years from now, and have it still sound relevant to them," said Lynch. "We want them to still be able to connect to our sound and our messages."

With their name becoming common on the tongues of Torontonians and locals alike after a series of successful and regular gigs, Doorstep Fire wants to use this opportunity to kick things up a notch with their first music video.

But they want to do it properly. They have partnered with a videographer who uses film to shoot content; an endeavour that will have a dramatic effect in the video, but will cost a pretty penny to make. "But we want to make sure we do this right," said Lynch.

As young musicians navigating the ins and outs of the urban music scene, Lynch has turned to the support of the community to assist in the funding for the project. The video, titled *Down Street*, is an anti-war protest song, shining a spotlight on the military occupation of foreign countries.

"I see so much frustration and anger in the world right now," said Lynch, "so I want to try to find those healthy ways to channel that properly, and bring light to corruption and war. I have a stage and I have a platform, and I feel like I have an obligation to do that."

The energy in Lynch's tone is plapable; and it's blatantly apparent that music flows through his veins, wraps around his soul. He is eager to take things to the next level, and to bolster his band - and their messages - farther into the music scene. "There's nothing else we want to do in life than play music," he said. "We want to come out of the gate swinging."

For more information on Doorstep Fire or to follow their journey around the development of *Down Street*, visit their Instagram page @doorstepfirehc.

Graham Backus off to a fast start in senior boys 7.5 kilometre race. /photos submitted

Annika Gervais gleefully exhausted after exhibition sprint

Violet Humphries launches as teammate Erika Hoare approaches in senior girls sprint relay.

Red Hawk skiers fly at COSSA Championships

The Red Hawk Nordic Ski team raced on the trails of Arrowhead Provincial Park for COSSA competition on Wednesday, Feb. 12, braving some very brisk morning temperatures. The meet combined skiers from the COSSA, GBSSA and CISSA Association Championships as skiers aimed to qualify for the OFSAA Nordic Championships next week in Sudbury.

The senior boys were first on the course, skiing 7.5 kilometres. The top Red Hawk skier was Brechin Johnston, with a second-place finish and a time of 28:02. Teammate Evan Backus followed in third; Graham Brackus fifth; Owen Megrah-Poppe eighth and Carter Sisco eleventh. The senior boys team finished first as a team in the interval races and followed Adam Scott for second in the 4x800 metre sprint relay later in the day.

The senior girls team swept the COSSA rankings led by Violet Humphries with a second-place finish and a time of 30:58; followed by Erika Hoare in third; Olivia Gruppe fourth; Ella Gervais fifth; Teagan Hamilton sixth; Grace Allder seventh and Hannah Sharp eightj, clearly dominating team rival Thomas A. Stewart Secondary School. The top four skiers teamed up to ski a very fast sprint relay to round out their gold-medal day, showing they can hang with ski powerhouses like Huntsville and Collingwood.

In the competitive junior boys division, Tristan Humphries made his debut on the COSSA podium finishing in third, completing the 5.5 kilometre course in 21:57. Tristan was closely followed by Winston Ramsdale in fourth; and new skiers Eric Mueller twelfth; Brady Hamilton fifteenth and Jack Sharp in nineteenth. The team was edged out by Adam Scott for interval race team champions, but fought back to beat them in the sprint relay.

Sole junior girl skier Annika Gervais skated her way to a silver medal with a time of 22:44 on the 5.5 kilometre course, also earning her first COSSA medal as a new high school skier. Gervais also placed third later in the day in the 800 metre exhibition sprint.

Hal High coaches Karen Gervais, Mike Rieger and community coaches Kevin Hoare and Joleen Thomas were all very pleased with the athletes' performances, their strong determination feeding their continued improvements as skiers. They are thrilled to be chaperoning such a wonderful group of skiers to the OFSAA Nordic Championships (updates in next week's paper). The team would also like to thank the hard-working groomers at Glebe who have kept the trails in shape for practice during this very snowy winter.

Submitted

HALIBURTON COUNTY HUSKIES
Home Game
NORTH YORK RANGERS VS HALIBURTON COUNTY HUSKIES
Wednesday, Feb. 26 - 4:30 p.m.
S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena
For more information please visit our website
WWW.HUSKIESHOCKEY.CA

Star light, star bright

Haliburton School of Art and Design teamed up with the Haliburton Sculpture Forest to offer a nighttime hike around the dazzling winter wonderland. Over 40 warmly-bundled participants showed up on the evening of Feb. 22 to explore the Sculpture Forest under starlight, with all proceeds going towards HSAD's bursary programs. /TIM YANO staff photographer

CSWB

Pairing OPP with mental health worker supports people experiencing crisis

MCRT (Mobile Crisis Response Team) was originally introduced, due in part to a growing need of social work in the realm of policing.

The Haliburton Highlands Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) pairs a Provincial Constable (PC) employed by the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and a Crisis Worker employed by CMHA (Canadian Mental Health Association with Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge Branch) who jointly respond to support persons in crisis, where police are called to assist. MCRT services include attending police calls for service, follow-ups, and proactive community engagement activities.

It became apparent that patients in crisis required alternative community supports to alleviate front-line pressure.

The Haliburton Highlands MCRT may be called out to any scene involving a person in crisis. Any person can experience a crisis; however, these situations can be exacerbated when a person is living with mental health concerns. Due to the unpredictable nature of police calls, MCRTs are only involved in calls when the officer determines it is safe for an MCRT Crisis Worker to attend. During a call for service involving someone in crisis, police can focus on safety, while the Crisis Worker can help to de-escalate the situation and support the person in crisis.

In addition to de-escalating situations, MCRTs aim to:

- Support individuals in crisis by providing a comprehensive community assessment, support, and referrals to appropriate resources
- Redirect individuals from unnecessary hospital emergency department visits and reduce costly pressures on the health-care system
- Redirect individuals from unnecessary criminal justice system involvement and reduce costly pressures on the court and correctional systems
- Alleviate the impact on police resources concerning mental health crisis response
- Diminish stigma of individuals living with mental health concerns
- Improve partnerships between mental health and justice sectors

The Haliburton Highlands OPP, in partnership with Canadian Mental Heath Association launched the program in February of 2024. In its first year, MCRT was involved with 408 calls for service.

The Haliburton Highlands MCRT covers the entire jurisdiction of Haliburton County and is in operation Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information about the MCRT program, visit cmhahkpr.ca/programs-and-services.

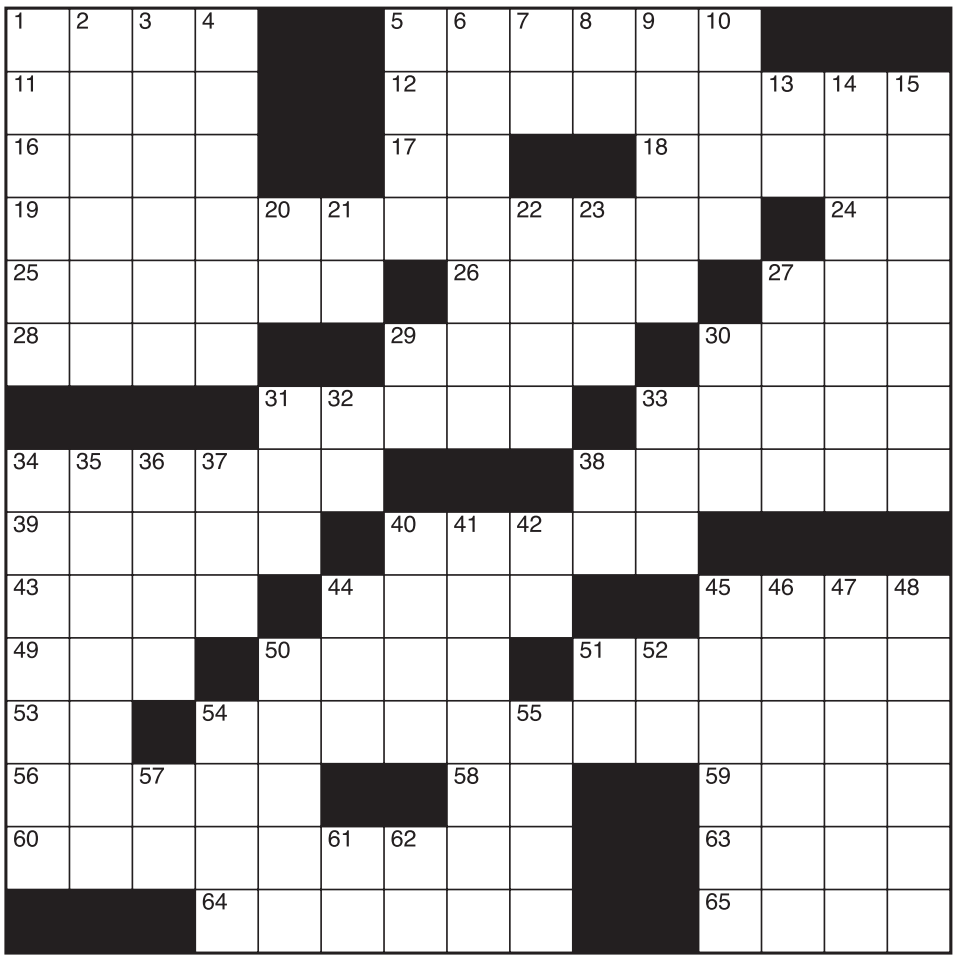
For more information about Community Safety and Well-Being in Haliburton County, visit www.haliburtoncounty.ca/cswb

Submitted by Joel Imbeau
Haliburton Highlands OPP

NDP comes to Haliburton

NDP candidate Barbara Doyle speaks to visitors at the Meet and Greet event at the Pinestone. Topics such as housing, affordability, grocery rebates, removing interest from OSAP loans, proper representation of Haliburton County's needs in provincial parliament, and the Thermëa Spa being built using taxpayer's dollars. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Around 20 people came out to the NDP Meet and Greet event held at the Pinestone on Saturday, Feb. 22.



CLUES ACROSS
1. Narrow piece of wood
5. African desert
11. Waxy covering on birds' beaks
12. Sour
16. Infrequent
17. Former AL MVP Vaughn
18. Policemen wear one
19. Out of the question
24. Used to chop
25. Symptoms
26. Not moving
27. Folk singer DiFranco
28. Comedian Armisen
29. Quantitative fact
30. Incline from vertical
31. Scottish musician
33. Rooney and Kate are two
34. Positioned
38. A very short time
39. Tropical American shrubs
40. Yemen capital
43. Spanish municipality
44. Medical professionals
45. Fibrous material
49. Confined condition (abbr.)
50. Without covering
51. "Mad Men" honcho Don
53. Hockey position
54. Taste property
56. Fertile spots in a desert
58. They precede C
59. "Requiem for a Dream" actor Jared
60. Try a criminal case
63. Liberal rights organization
64. Spoke
65. Insect repellent

CLUES DOWN
1. Unshaven facial hair
2. More thin
3. Show up
4. Seethed
5. Ancient Greek city
6. Poisonous plant
7. Hello
8. College sports official
9. Monetary unit of Russia
10. Wings
13. Take too much of a substance
14. A citizen of Uganda
15. Most appealing
20. Atomic #18
21. Global investment bank (abbr.)
22. Jewish calendar month
23. Popular sandwich
27. Swiss river
29. Incorrect letters
30. Popular entree
31. Foot (Latin)
32. A driver's license is one form
33. Extinct flightless bird
34. Appetizer
35. After battles
36. It neutralizes alkalis
37. Beverage container
38. Partner to "Pa"
40. Gray American rail
41. Salt of acetic acid
42. Canadian province
44. Dish made with lentils
45. Narrative poem of popular origin
46. For each one
47. Come to terms
48. Test
50. More dishonorable
51. Unit of loudness
52. The Ocean State
54. Monetary unit in Mexico
55. Lying down
57. Thus
61. Where LA is located
62. Western State

Answers on page 17

Love songs and sweet treats

The Highland Summer Festival hosted a Loving 25 Years event at the Legion on Valentine's Day. Guests at the ticketed event were treated to an evening of musical talents the festival has presented over the last few years. Right, Sue Vorvis sells baked goods to raise money for the coming festival season. Below, former HSF performers belted out classic musical theatre tunes to an engaged audience. /ADAM FRISK special to the *Echo*

Municipality of Dysart et al
135 Maple Ave., P.O. Box 389,
Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0
Telephone: (705) 457-1740
Email: info@dysartetal.ca
Website: www.dysartetal.ca

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING
COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT

- **DATE**: Wednesday, March 12th, 2025
- **TIME**: 11:00 am.
- **LOCATION**: The Committee of Adjustment meeting will be held in the Council Chambers and electronically via Zoom. The meeting will be live streamed to YouTube.

APPLICATIONS:

1. D13-MV-2024-025 Haedicke

- The following variance is requested to permit an increase to the total number of accessory structures on a lot located in the RS zone:

  a) A variance to Section 5.2 to permit 3 accessory buildings as opposed to the permitted maximum of 2.

- Location: Part Lot 11, Concession 8, Part 1, Plan 19R-2212, Part 11, Plan 19R-9193 in the Geographic Township of Dysart, in the Municipality of Dysart et al.
  Roll No. 011-000-66601 – 5000 County Road 21

2. D13-MV-2025-001 Cox

- The following variances are requested to permit the expansion of a legal non-conforming residential use on a lot located in the CT zone:

  a) A variance pursuant to Section 45(2)(a)(i) of the Planning Act R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13 to permit the expansion of a legal non-conforming use for a dwelling such that the total area excluding decks and verandas is 250 square metres (2691 square feet). Decks are restricted to 60 square metres (646 square feet) and Verandas are restricted to 25 square metres (269 square feet).

  b) A variance to Section 7.2 to permit a dwelling to have a minimum exterior side lot line setback of 6 metres (19.6 feet) as opposed to required minimum exterior side lot line setback of 7.5 metres (24.6 feet) as granted by minor variance D13-MV-2023-023.

- Location: Part Lot 30, Concession 7, in the Geographic Township of Guilford, in the Municipality of Dysart et al.
  Roll No. 041-000-34000 – 1197 Klondike Road

3. D13-MV-2025-003 Powell

- The following variances are requested to permit construction of a shed on a property in the WR4 zone:

  a) A variance to Section 5.2 to permit a shed to have a minimum exterior side lot line setback of 0.9 metres (3 feet) as opposed to required minimum of 3 metres (10 feet) as granted by minor variance D13-MV-2022-011.

  b) A variance to Section 3.30 to permit a shed to have a minimum street setback of 5.4 metres (18 feet) as opposed to required minimum of 8.5 metres (28 feet) as granted by minor variance D13-MV-2022-011.

- Location: Part Lot 15, Concession 7, Part Lots 25 and 26, Plan 362, Parts 7, 8, 10 and 12, Plan 19R-8269 in the Geographic Township of Harburn, in the Municipality of Dysart et al.
  Roll No. 050-000-47000 and 050-000-47005 – 1494 Curry Road

4. D13-MV-2025-004 Selbie

- The following variance is requested to permit a single family dwelling to have an increased structure height on a property in the RR-5 zone:

  a) A variance to Section 5.2 to permit a seasonal dwelling to have a maximum structure height of 13.7 metres (45 feet) as opposed to the permitted 9.5 metres (31.2 feet).

- Location: Part Lot 15, Concession 6, in the Geographic Township of Dysart, in the Municipality of Dysart et al.
  Roll No. 010-000-55600 – Cowan Road

FOR MORE INFORMATION about electronic meetings and public participation in an electronic meeting, contact the Secretary-Treasurer at ameijer@dysartetal.ca.

ANY PERSON is entitled to attend the hearing to express his/her views about these applications or may be represented by an agent for that purpose. If you do not attend the hearing the Committee may proceed in your absence, and you will not be entitled to any further notice of the proceedings. The Committee will accept oral and written submissions.

A COPY OF THE DECISION will be sent to the applicant, the agent and to each person who has filed with the Secretary-Treasurer a written request for notice of the decision.

FURTHER INFORMATION: including specific information about the zone provisions affected by each application, and electronic meeting process is available from the Planning and Land Information Department at the Municipal Office by appointment only (8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday) or by phoning 705-457-1740.

Adam Meijer
Secretary-Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment

huskies hockey

The Huskies kicked off their home game against the Markham Royals on Feb. 22 with a billet family celebration, honouring the many families who open their homes to the Huskies players throughout the season. All billet families were welcomed onto the ice with flowers and applause. The Huskies went on to beat Markham 5-1. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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E	G	D	A	B	■	■	O	M	■	■	E	A
S	U	O	L	U	D	I	C	A	■	■	E	R
■	■	■	A	R	A	H	A	S	■	■	T	A

It was a double-header weekend for the Huskies, with a second game on Feb. 23. Before the start of the game, management was sure to celebrate the graduating Huskies players, who would not be returning to the team next season. Coaches and parents of the players were invited to join them on the ice for the celebration. The team went on to win against the Stouffville Spirit following the graduation ceremony, with a score of 4-3. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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540 COMING EVENTS

St. Pauls Anglican Church
19 Invergordon Ave. Minden **Shrove Tuesday, March 4th** 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Pancakes and Sausages Desserts and Coffee or Tea By Donation

400 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Hyland Ice Supply is now accepting applications for the 2025 summer season for Drivers Helpers, Production Staff and Drivers (D, DZ, G). Interviews will be held early April. Please contact us via e-mail or telephone **info@hylandice.com 705-448-2973** Attention Carol

Township of Algonquin Highlands

Township of Algonquin Highlands
Public Works Department

We are currently accepting resumes for the following position:

Operator – Dorset Yard

Visit our website at: www.algonquinhighlands.ca for the complete details.

Qualified candidates are invited to submit a cover letter and resume to:

Dawn Mugford-Guay
Human Resources Coordinator
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Road
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Email: dmugfordguay@algonquinhighlands.ca

Township of Algonquin Highlands

Township of Algonquin Highlands
Parks, Recreation and Trails Department

We are currently accepting resumes for the following positions:

Senior Trail Technician/By-Law Officer
Trail Technician/By-Law Officer

Visit our website at: www.algonquinhighlands.ca for the complete job description.

Qualified candidates are invited to submit a cover letter and resume to:

Dawn Mugford-Guay,
Human Resources Coordinator
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Road
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Email: dmugfordguay@algonquinhighlands.ca

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The Municipality of Dysart et al is seeking an energetic individual to join our Public Works team in the role of our Environmental Manager.

The Environmental Manager will have expertise in environmental management and be able to provide sound recommendations for the municipality regarding programs, initiatives, best practices and policy in areas including waste management, energy conservation and environmental education.

A detailed job description can be found on our careers page: www.dysartetal.ca/en/municipal-government/careers

Interested persons can apply by submitting a resume to Human Resources Manager, Sonja Marx by email smarx@dysartetal.ca no later than 12:30pm Friday March 14, 2025.

We thank all of those who apply, but only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Accommodations for applicants with disabilities will be provided upon request. The Municipality of Dysart et al is an equal opportunity employer. Personal information is collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and will be used only for employment purposes.

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Heat-Line welcomes and encourages applications from people with disabilities. Accommodations are available on request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process.

Please forward your resume to tamara@heatline.com
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The Corporation of the County of Haliburton is currently recruiting for the following seasonal roles:

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Two (2) Flagperson/ Labourer(s)
G licence and experience in manual labour positions required.
Hourly rate is $20.56. Unionized CUPE position.

One (1) Engineering (Seasonal) Student
G licence and current enrolment in an engineering program required.
Hourly rate is $25.47. Unionized CUPE position.

HALIBURTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Haliburton County Public Library is currently recruiting for a Communications Coordinator
This part-time position (28 hours per week) develops and implements strategies to increase the community's engagement with library services and provides admin assistance. Hourly wage range is $32.29 - $37.77.

Applications
Visit our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for detailed postings and job descriptions.
Forward your resume to shume@haliburtoncounty.ca no later than **March 10, 2025.**

We thank all who apply for this position; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted. The County of Haliburton is an equal employer. Accommodation can be provided in all steps of the hiring process, please contact Human Resources for further details. In accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the information gathered will be used solely for the purpose of job selection.

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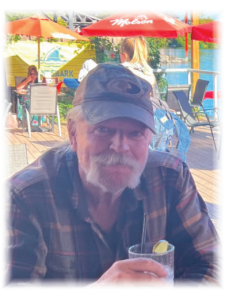

In Loving Memory of

Patrick Arthur O'Connor

1956 – 2025

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Patrick Arthur O'Connor on January 26, 2025. Patrick was a beloved brother to Michael (Martha), Shane (Christine), and Brian (Anne -2016), and a cherished uncle to Caity and Patrick, Carey, Shannon and Kyli.

A graduate of Western University, Patrick enjoyed a remarkable career as a civil engineer. He began his professional journey with CN Rail before co-founding the specialized railway engineering firm Claire Wicklow Engineers. He then spent 18 years with Hatch Mott MacDonald, working on projects across Canada, as well as in Guinea, Jamaica and Pakistan. Known for his generosity in sharing his knowledge, many of today's railway engineering professionals credit his patient guidance as foundational to their success.

Outside of his career, Patrick found great joy snowmobiling with friends, and in weekends and holidays spent at his family's farm in Gelert. There, he put his best engineering skills to use as the self-appointed official Christmas toy builder, a tradition that brought much joy to the family.

After retiring in 2015, Patrick found serenity at his beautiful 1860s log cabin in Kinmount, nestled on 100 acres of natural beauty. There, he crafted scenic walking trails and embraced the tranquility of the land. Patrick's hands were never idle—his workshop was his sanctuary, where he would bring mechanical things back to life with remarkable skill.

A proud and respected member of the Old Saw Hunting Camp in Anson Township, Patrick enjoyed hunting and fishing with friends, where his ingenuity, musicality, and thoughtfulness were greatly admired.

Patrick leaves behind a legacy of hard work, adventure, and unwavering support. His warmth, wisdom, and generosity will be deeply missed by all who were fortunate enough to know him. The family invites you to share photos or stories to MemoriesofPatOC@gmail.com. A Celebration of Life will be held in the spring.

In Loving Memory of

Ann Coventry Barker

(Former Owner of Don Barker Heating and Cooling)

Passed away peacefully at Hyland Crest Senior Citizens Home, Minden on Monday, February 17, 2025 at the age of 85.

Beloved wife of the late Donald (2014). Dear mother of Stephen (the late Barb), David (Jonothon) and Leeanna. Loving grandma to Curtis (Megan), Gavin (Sammie), William, Jennifer and great grandma Sienna and Terra. Fondly remembered by family and friends.

Ann and Don moved to Carnarvon in 1974 and purchased the Little Chick Inn owned it until 1979. Ann then operated her own catering business; many will remember her fantastic roast beef dinners at the Stanhope Fire Hall. She was on the Stanhope Council from 1982-2000 and acted as Deputy Reeve from 1988-1991.

Friends are invited to visit the family at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0 on Saturday, May 3, 2025 from 11:00 am until the time of the Service to Celebrate Ann's Life at 1:00 pm. Reception to follow in the Monk-Cray Family Centre. Interment at Maple Lake Cemetery.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF) would be appreciated by the family.

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

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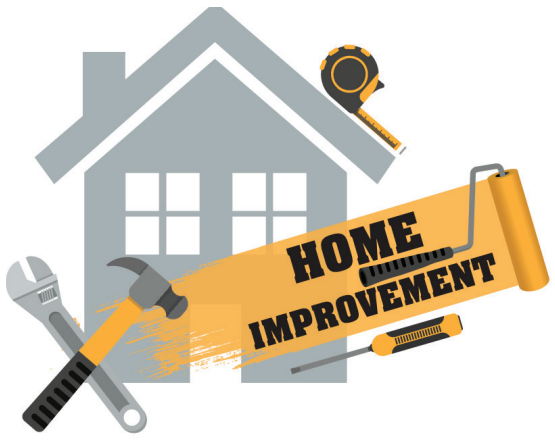

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The Times
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County Life

INSIDE THIS WEEK:

SPRING FORWARD!
Daylight Saving Time is coming a little early. You lose an hour's sleep this weekend.

WINTER FUN
Not everyone is upset winter is still here. Many people get out and enjoy it.

ATOMS BLAST OFF
Highland Storm team is about to head to all-Ontario championships

THE ECHO
HALIBURTON COUNTY
TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2007 www.haliburtonecho.ca VOL. 124 NO. 10 $1.25 INCL. GST

Principal doubts merit of school ranking

GREG HOEKSTRA
Staff Reporter

A recent report by the C.D. Howe Institute has one local elementary school principal defending her school's reputation and questioning the researchers' methodology.

The report, entitled Ontario's Best Public Schools, evaluates publicly-funded elementary schools based on standardized testing results and socio-economic factors. It was released with fanfare by the institute last Wednesday and garnered some media attention.

Haliburton's J. Douglas Hodgson Elementary School was one of the schools that received a relatively low ranking when compared with other institutions. According to the Howe Institute, JDHES has a pass rate of 42.1 per cent, which is 17.1 per cent below the provincial average. The school was also ranked in the bottom fifth percentile when compared with schools with similar socio-economic environments.

But despite the somewhat lackluster results, JDHES Principal Traci Hubbert is confident that her school is an upstanding institution, and feels that people shouldn't give much weight to such a report.

"I don't personally believe in ranking schools," says Hubbert. "It's like comparing apples and oranges, because no two schools are the same in terms of the school community, their children, their teachers, the resources they have, or the support of parents."

Hubbert also questions the

See **Report** page 4

CASEY LESSARD/Echo

Skipping through winter

Kendall Harrison skips in the snow during an obstacle course set up during J Douglas Hodgson Elementary School's French immersion Carnaval Wednesday. Jessica Kennedy and Dakota Harris-Saxby are running the station, which was one of several activities. The event also included a visit by French folk band Le Grand Portage, who led dancing sessions. For more photos, please see page 15.

EMS answers the call for faster service

GREG HOEKSTRA
Staff Reporter

In an effort to reduce emergency response times Haliburton County EMS will soon redeploy ambulances to both Highlands East and Algonquin Highlands.

Starting on April 1, one ambulance will be stationed in Highlands East four days a week, while another will be stationed in Algonquin Highlands for two days a week. Though locations aren't yet confirmed, it's proposed that the units be stationed at central locations in each municipality, namely the Wilberforce fire hall and Stanhope Community Centre.

Ambulances will soon be stationed in Highlands East and Algonquin Highlands.

Currently the county has two ambulances that are on duty 24 hours a day – one based in Minden and another in the village of Haliburton. A third ambulance, which also operates out of the Haliburton base 12 hours a day, will now move around the municipality, aiding county officials in their redeployment strategy.

After examining the response times, call volumes, and call types for each of the county's four municipalities since 2004, EMS director Pat Kennedy says a trend was identified regarding the locations and times of day that emergency calls tend to arise.

"It's actually pretty consistent...and we were surprised because it works out very well with the scheduling system we have in place right now," says Kennedy. "Very few adjustments will be needed for this to be effective, so it kind of all just fell into place."

Under the new proposal one Haliburton ambulance will be redeployed to Wilberforce on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday between the hours of 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.. Then, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, one Haliburton ambulance will move to the Minden base, allowing the Minden unit to shift north to Algonquin Highlands.

The aim of the new strategy is to meet the mandated time-

°See **County's** page 13

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3 UNITS AVAILABLE
STARTING AT $319,000
UNIT 1, 2 AND 4

CHANDLER POINT $67,000

FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP

3 X BED | 2 X BATH | MLS# X11884689

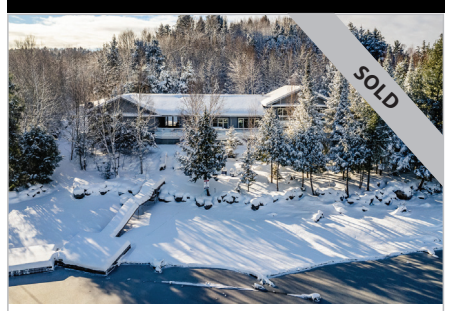
KUSHOG LAKE (RD BETWEEN) $549,900

2 X BATH | MLS# X11959957

BLACK RIVER/DRAG LAKE $499,000

3 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# X10435688

LITTLE REDSTONE LAKE $1,675,000



5 X BED | 4X BATH | MLS# X10436789

HALIBURTON LAKE $799,000

3 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# X10434776

HALIBURTON LAKE $1,250,000

4 X BED | 3 X BATH | MLS# X10439458

EAGLE LAKE $925,000

3 X BED | 2 X BATH | MLS# X10438580

KENNISIS LAKE $750,000

3 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# X10894143

BAUMGARTNER B|R REALTY GROUP

VACANT LAND FOR SALE

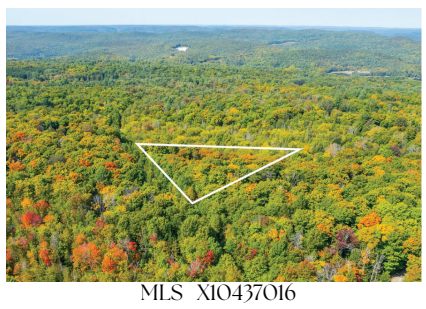
Haliburton Lake Road
MLS X10437518
$250,000
14.53 Acres

Basshaunt Lake Road
VTB Available
MLS X10437016
$109,000
2.19 Acres

Bethel Road
MLS X11955874
$178,000
25 Acres

Wenona Lake Road
MLS X11953943
$95,000
0.42 Acres

FEATURED LISTING



MLS X10437016

LT 49 Basshaunt Lake Road
$105,000
Eagle Lake
Vendor Take Back mortgage available
2.19 Acres

Linda Baumgartner - Broker of Record | Owner
(705) 457.3461
contact@baumgartnerrealty.ca
www.baumgartnerrealty.ca

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